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LETTER DATED 10 DECEMBER 1999 FROM THE SECRETARY-GENERAL ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

I have the honour to convey the attached communication, dated 9 December 1999, which I have received from the Secretary-General of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would bring it to the attention of the members of the Security Council.

(Signed) Kofi A. ANNAN

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Annex

Letter dated 9 December 1999 from the Secretary-General of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization addressed to the Secretary-General

In accordance with Security Council resolution 1088 (1996), I attach the monthly report on the operations of the Stabilization Force. I would appreciate your making this report available to the Security Council.

(Signed) George ROBERTSON

Enclosure

Monthly report to the Security Council on the operations of the Stabilization Force

1. Over the reporting period (21 October-12 November), there were approximately 29,000 troops deployed in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia, with contributions from all NATO allies and from 16 non-NATO countries. Stabilization Force (SFOR) troops continued to conduct surveillance and reconnaissance by means of ground and air patrols, and operations across the SFOR area included area security, monitoring the border with the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, monitoring the entity armed forces, conducting inspections of weapons storage sites and providing support to the international organizations in theatre. Over the period, combat aircraft flew for approximately 145 hours.

2. SFOR troops continued to monitor compliance with the provisions of Security Council resolution 1160 (1998), prohibiting the transport of weapons into the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, with an intensified presence on the ground in order to enforce the embargo. No violations were reported over the period.

3. SFOR troops continued to monitor the movement of controlled petroleum products into the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia by establishing traffic control points. No violations were reported over the period.

4. On 26 October, SFOR troops in Prijedor, in Multinational Division South-West, detained a Bosnian Serb, Damir Dosen, indicted for war crimes by the International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia. Dosen was subsequently transferred to The Hague.

Cooperation and compliance by the parties

5. Over the reporting period, the situation in theatre remained stable, with the entities in substantial compliance with the military provisions of the Peace Agreement. Isolated acts of violence were reported, the most serious of which were a car bomb attack on 22 October in Banja Luka against a Bosnian Serb journalist, Zeljko Kopanja, and two explosions in Zvornik, on 30 and 31 October, the first near Zvornik bus station and the second outside the United Nations International Police Task Force (IPTF) headquarters. There were no serious injuries.

6. In Multinational Division South-East, a demonstration has been under way since 20 October, when Bosniac farmers from Gorazde demonstrated for their right to work on their land in Kopaci, in the Republika Srpska. Road blocks were erected on the Gorazde-Sarajevo road, the number of demonstrators varying between 30 and 100. SFOR troops and multinational specialized units continue to monitor the situation. There have been no reports of violence.

7. Over the reporting period, SFOR troops conducted a total of 245 military weapons storage site inspections: 52 Bosniac; 48 Bosnian Croat; 108 Bosnian Serb; and 37 Federation. No instances of non-compliance were reported.

8. SFOR troops monitored a total of 750 training and movement activities: 297 Bosniac; 72 Bosnian Croat; 291 Bosnian Serb; and 90 Federation. The training and movement ban on the Republika Srpska Police Anti-Terrorist Brigade remains in effect until further notice, as does the ban imposed on elements of the third Bosnian Serb Army Corps on 27 February as a result of their involvement in the illegal transfer of weapons. Over the reporting period a ban was imposed on the first Bosnian Serb Army Corps because of their non-compliance with demining requirements.

9. The mine-clearing campaign continued, with the deployment of 36 entity armed forces demining teams. Over the reporting period, these teams conducted 804 mine-clearing operations, removing 62 anti-personnel mines and 64 items of unexploded ordnance from 111,267 square metres of land. Demining activities will continue for as long as the weather permits, and thereafter a minimal number of teams will continue to work in the south of the country.

Cooperation with international organizations

10. Within capabilities, and in accordance with its mandate, SFOR continues to provide assistance to the international organizations in theatre, including the United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina, IPTF, the International Tribunal, the Office of the High Representative, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.

11. SFOR continues to play an active role in supporting the efforts of the Office of the High Representative to establish joint institutions in Bosnia and Herzegovina, particularly the Standing Committee on Military Matters. On 3 November, Republika Srpska Defence Minister Milovanovic attended a Standing Committee meeting for the first time since the arrest of General Talic in August. At that meeting, Ministers received a series of reports from the secretariat and from the Working Groups of the Standing Committee (the establishment of which was reported last month). The Working Group on Security Policy reported that a measure of agreement had been reached on the development of a common security policy, and that a report, outlining the way forward, should be submitted by the next meeting. The Working Group on Defence Reductions formally submitted proposals for reducing the size of the entity armed forces.

Outlook

12. Isolated incidents of violence and intimidation are likely to continue in response to the return of refugees and displaced persons.